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| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
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| 10/561,528 | 12/20/2005 | Hiroshi Taniuchi | 01272.020678 | 9818 |
| 5514 7590 07/05/2007 FITZPATRICK CELLA HARPER & SCINTO 30 ROCKEFELLER PLAZA NEW YORK, NY 10112 | | | EXAMINER DUBNOW, JOSHUA M | |
| | | | ART UNIT 2861 | PAPER NUMBER |
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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/561,528

Applicant(s)

TANIUCHI ET AL.

Examiner

Joshua M. Dubnow

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2861

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 1 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 20 December 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-25 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☒ Claim(s) 1-25 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Restriction is required under 35 U.S.C. 121 and 372.

This application contains the following inventions or groups of inventions which are not so linked as to form a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1.

In accordance with 37 CFR 1.499, applicant is required, in reply to this action, to elect a single invention to which the claims must be restricted.

Group I, claim(s) 1-10, drawn to an image forming method with a step of performing surface modifying processing.

Group II, claim(s) 11, drawn to an image forming method with the intermediate transfer body surface containing at least a fluorine or silicone compound.

Group III, claim(s) 12, drawn to an image forming apparatus with application of energy for modification of a surface.

Group IV, claim(s) 13, drawn to an image forming apparatus with a surface containing at least a fluorine or silicone compound.

Group V, claim(s) 14, drawn to an image forming method with a step of applying a first liquid for increasing an ink viscosity.

Group VI, claim(s) 15, drawn to an image forming apparatus method with application of a first liquid for increasing an ink viscosity.

Group VII, claim(s) 16, drawn to a surface modifying method with a step of surface modifying through application of energy.

Group VIII, claim(s) 17, drawn to a surface modifying method with an intermediate transfer body having a surface containing at least fluorine or silicone compound.

Group IX, claim(s) 18, drawn to an intermediate transfer body being surface modified through application of energy.

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Group X, claim(s) 19, drawn to an intermediate transfer body having a surface containing at least a fluorine or silicone compound.

Group XI, claim(s) 20, drawn to an image forming method that performs surface modifying processing through plasma processing and surfactant application.

Group XII, claim(s) 21, drawn to an image forming method that provides an intermediate transfer body having a surface containing a fluorine or silicone compound.

Group XIII, claim(s) 22, drawn to an image forming apparatus with means for surface modifying processing through plasma processing.

Group XIV, claim(s) 23, drawn to an image forming apparatus with means for mounting an intermediate transfer body having a surface containing at least a fluorine or silicone compound.

Group XV, claim(s) 24, drawn to an image forming method with a step of applying a liquid containing a surfactant for improving wettability.

Group XVI, claim(s) 25, drawn to an image forming method with a step of applying a liquid to reduce the fluidity of the ink.

2. The inventions listed as Groups I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X, XI, XII, XIII, XIV, XV, and XVI do not relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 because, under PCT Rule 13.2, they lack the same or corresponding special technical features for the following reasons: The groups listed above are not within the permitted combination of different categories of inventions. That is nine methods, five apparatuses, and two bodies. As set forth in PCT/JP2004/009090, there is no special technical feature that defines a contribution over the prior art. US 2003/068571 and US 2003/103123 have common technical features.

3. Upon election of invention I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X, XI, XII, XIII, XIV, XV, or XVI, the applicant is further required to elect one of the following disclosed species. These species are deemed to lack unity of invention because they are not so linked as to form a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1.

The species are as follows:

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- A. The surface of the intermediate transfer body contains at least one of a fluorine compound and a silicone compound.
- B. The surface of the intermediate transfer body is formed of an elastic material with a hardness of between 10 and 100 degrees.

4. Upon election of A or B, the applicant is further required to elect one of the following disclosed species. These species are deemed to lack unity of invention because they are not so linked as to form a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1.

The species are as follows:

- a. The surface modifying processing through the application of energy is plasma processing performed at an atmospheric pressure or reduced pressure.
- b. The surface modifying processing through the application of energy is performed at an arbitrary interval.

5. The inventions listed as Groups I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X, XI, XII, XIII, XIV, XV, and XVI do not relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 because, under PCT Rule 13.2, they lack the same or corresponding special technical features for the following reasons: The groups listed above are not within the permitted combination of different categories of inventions. That is nine methods, five apparatuses, and two bodies. As set forth in PCT/JP2004/009090, there is no special technical feature that defines a contribution over the prior art. US 2003/068571 and US 2003/103123 have common technical features.

Applicant is required, in reply to this action, to elect a single species to which the claims shall be restricted if no generic claim is finally held to be allowable. The reply must also identify the claims readable on the elected species, including any claims subsequently added. An argument that a claim is allowable or that all claims are generic is considered non-responsive unless accompanied by an election.

Upon the allowance of a generic claim, applicant will be entitled to consideration of claims to additional species which are written in dependent form or otherwise include all the limitations of an allowed generic claim as provided by 37 CFR 1.141. If claims are added after the election, applicant must indicate which are readable upon the elected species. MPEP § 809.02(a).

6. The claims are deemed to correspond to the species listed above in the following manner:

Claim 2 corresponds to species A, and claim 3 corresponds to species B. Claim 3 corresponds to species a, and claim 4 corresponds to species b.

The following claim(s) are generic: Claim 1.

7. The species listed above do not relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 because, under PCT Rule 13.2, the species lack the same or corresponding special technical features for the following reasons: As set forth in PCT/JP2004/009090, there is no special technical feature that defines a contribution over the prior art.

Applicant is advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include (i) an election of a species or invention to be examined even though the requirement be traversed (37 CFR 1.143) and (ii) identification of the claims encompassing the elected invention.

The election of an invention or species may be made with or without traverse. To reserve a right to petition, the election must be made with traverse. If the reply does not distinctly and specifically point out supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election shall be treated as an election without traverse.

Should applicant traverse on the ground that the inventions or species are not patentably distinct, applicant should submit evidence or identify such evidence now of record showing the inventions or species to be obvious variants or clearly admit on the record that this is the case. In either instance, if the examiner finds one of the inventions unpatentable over the prior art, the evidence or admission may be used in a rejection under 35 U.S.C.103(a) of the other invention.

8. Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Joshua M. Dubnow whose telephone number is 571-270-1337. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 8:30-5:00.

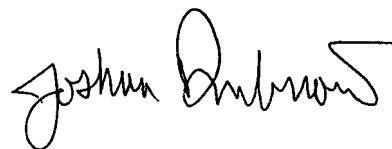
If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Matthew Luu can be reached on 571-272-7663. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



MATTHEW LUU
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER



Joshua M Dubnow
Examiner
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June 28, 2007